

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7 and 9-22 are pending in this application. Claims 10-20 have been withdrawn from consideration. By this Amendment, claim 1 and the Abstract are amended. Support for the amendment to claim 1 can be found, for example, in the specification at paragraph [0022]. No new matter is added.

In view of the foregoing amendments, following remarks and the data in the attached Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.132, reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

I. Objection to the Specification

The Office Action objects to the Abstract for including more than 150 words. Attached to this Amendment is an amended Abstract that obviates the objection. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

A. Sugimoto and Miyazaki

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 7 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,429,846 to Sugimoto et al. ("Sugimoto") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,599,463 to Miyazaki et al. ("Miyazaki"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "An electrode level difference absorbing print paste comprising ceramic powder, a binder resin, a plasticizer and a solvent, wherein ... a content of the solvent is 50 to 70 parts by weight with respect to 100 parts by weight of the paste ... a viscosity of the electrode level difference absorbing print paste is 4 to 30 Pa·s when being given rotation of obtaining a shear rate of 8[1/s]" Applicants respectfully assert that Sugimoto and Miyazaki, individually or in combination, fail to have rendered obvious at least the above features of claim 1.

The Office Action, on page 4, acknowledges that Sugimoto fails to disclose the claimed amount of solvent. Thus, the Office Action applies the disclosure of Miyazaki to allegedly address this discrepancy of Sugimoto. The Office Action asserts that Miyazaki discloses a ceramic slurry using 35 parts by weight of an organic solvent. See Office Action, page 4 and Miyazaki, col. 15, line 2. The Office Action asserts that it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to have modified Sugimoto to include little solvent to "reduce the drying time and to improve the uniformity of the film surface, as taught by Miyazaki." Office Action, page 4.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully assert that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the disclosure of Sugimoto in view of Miyazaki to include the claimed amount of solvent at least because such a modification would significantly increase the amount of solvent from that disclosed in Miyazaki and, thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have expected to achieve the alleged benefits of Miyazaki if the claimed amount of solvent was used. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully assert that Sugimoto and Miyazaki, individually or in combination, would not have rendered obvious each and every feature of claim 1.

Additionally, the Office Action, on page 5, acknowledges that Sugimoto does not disclose the claimed viscosity. However, the Office Action asserts that Sugimoto discloses viscosities within the range from 20 to 270 centipoises, and that the viscosity may be adjusted according to its intended use. See Office Action, page 6. However, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed viscosity provides improved and unexpected results that would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art from the disclosure of Sugimoto and Miyazaki.

To support the above assertion, Applicants submit the attached Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.132 ("Declaration"). In the Declaration, numerous examples are provided using

various amounts of binder resin with differing polymerization and butyralation degrees. See Declaration, pages 2-3. The "hanging of paste," "stacking property (stacking precision)" and "sheet erosion" for each example were measured where possible. See Declaration, Tables 11-20. The "hanging of paste" occurs when the viscosity of a paste is so low that the paste hangs over the edges of the electrode, which hinders the performance of the electrode. As can be seen in each of Tables 11-20, when the viscosity of the paste is below the minimum claimed value, hanging of the paste occurs. However, when the viscosity of the paste is within the claimed range, hanging of the paste does not occur. Further, when the viscosity of the paste is above the maximum claimed value, hanging of the paste is not measurable. Thus, the data in the attached Declaration shows that the claimed viscosity provides "hanging of paste" values that are unexpected and would not have been obvious from the disclosure of Sugimoto or Miyazaki, individually or in combination.

Further, as shown in Tables 11-20, "stacking precision" and "sheet erosion" properties are unexpectedly improved when the viscosity is within the claimed range. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that at least the claimed "viscosity of the electrode level difference absorbing print paste is 4 to 30 Pa·s when being given rotation of obtaining a shear rate of 8[1/s]" would not have been rendered obvious by Sugimoto and Miyazaki, individually or in combination.

Claim 1 would not have been rendered obvious by Sugimoto and Miyazaki, individually or in combination. Claims 7 and 21 variously depend from claim 1 and, thus also would not have been rendered obvious by Sugimoto and Miyazaki, individually or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Sugimoto, Miyazaki and Suzuki

The Office Action rejects claims 9 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sugimoto in view of Miyazaki and further in view of JP 2002-313672 to Suzuki et al. ("Suzuki").

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

For at least the reasons stated above, Sugimoto and Miyazaki would not have rendered obvious each and every feature of claim 1. Further, the Office Action merely applies Suzuki as allegedly disclosing the use of an antistatic agent. Thus, Suzuki is not applied to address the above discrepancies of Sugimoto and Miyazaki as to claim 1. Therefore, Sugimoto, Miyazaki and Suzuki, individually or in combination, would not have rendered obvious each and every feature of claim 1.

Claim 1 would not have been rendered obvious by Sugimoto, Miyazaki and Suzuki, individually or in combination. Claims 19 and 22 variously depend from claim 1 and, thus, also would not have been rendered obvious by Sugimoto, Miyazaki and Suzuki, individually or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.132
Amended Abstract

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